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October 1, 2010

The Honorable Melissa K. Johnson  
Mayor of the City of West Jordan  
8000 S. Redwood Rd.  
West Jordan, UT 84088

Dear Mayor Johnson:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of 410,000 members, more than two-thirds of the nation's pilots – including over 3,000 of our members in the state of Utah. On behalf of our membership, AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability of general aviation airports and their facilities as part of a national transportation system.

We are writing today to express our concerns with recent statements made by you regarding the closure of South Valley Regional (U42) also known as Salt Lake #2. You mentioned that safety concerns are one of the reasons to evaluate whether closing the airport would benefit the community of West Jordan. It is unfortunate that previous local planning decisions allowed the airport to become encroached by significant residential development, but on balance the airport has a good safety record with only 39 accidents since 1983. Most of those had minor or no injuries, unfortunately three were fatal accidents.

Additionally, the city of West Jordan benefits greatly from U42 in several ways, some not readily apparent. As you know there is a National Guard unit stationed at the airport as well as 249 private aircraft. With more than 80,000 annual operations the economic impact to the community both West Jordan and the region is \$54,375,900 as reported by the Utah Division of Aeronautics in their 2004 *Economic Impact of Utah's Airports* report. That includes total aviation related employment of 1,220 with a total salary of \$36,330,500. The top three activities at U42 include recreational flying, military flight operations and civilian flight training. In addition there is a good level of corporate activity as well as serving as the general aviation visitor gateway to the region.


We understand that the City of Salt Lake, who owns the airport, values South Valley Regional as an important part of their system of airports reducing congestion at Salt Lake City International Airport and that they would not consider closing the airport. It is the Association's contention and commitment that South Valley Regional Airport should remain open.

We note that flying over urban neighborhoods is a common issue for pilots today, and AOPA's Air Safety Institute (ASI) has developed a Safety Seminar targeted to that issue, to help increase their safety awareness. The ASI is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization promoting safety and

pilot proficiency in general aviation through quality training, education, research, analysis, and the dissemination of information. We would be pleased to have this seminar presented to pilots in your area to increase their awareness of best practices for such activity.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this subject. We look forward to working with you to promote South Valley Regional as a safe and economically vital part of West Jordan's transportation infrastructure. In the meantime, should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



John L. Collins  
Manager  
Airport Policy

Cc:

The Honorable Kim V. Rolfe, West Jordan Council Member  
The Honorable Jim J. Lems, West Jordan Council Member  
The Honorable Ben Southworth, West Jordan Council Member  
The Honorable Lyle C. Summers, West Jordan Council Member  
The Honorable Clive M. Killpack, West Jordan Council Member  
The Honorable Chad Nichols, West Jordan Council Member  
The Honorable Jason Chaffetz, United States Representative  
Mr. Alvin L. Stuart, AAE, Superintendent of Airport Operations, Salt Lake City Department of Airports